WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A computer implemented method of sharing information among members of a group, the method comprising:

storing information about all current members of a group;

receiving instructions from at least one current member to invite at least one prospective member to join the group;

sending an invitation to the prospective member to join the group;

receiving an affirmative response from the prospective member;

adding the prospective member to of the group as a new member; and

automatically updating services to current members to account for the new member.

2.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein sending the invitation comprising using an e-mail message.

3.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein sending the invitation comprises using an instant message.

4.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein sending the invitation comprises using an on-line chat room.

5.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the affirmative response comprises receiving the response as an e-mail message.

6.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the affirmative response comprises receiving the response as an instant message.

7.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the affirmative response comprises receiving the response in an on-line chat room.

1   8.   The computer implemented method of claim 1, wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises providing a list of current members that includes the new

3 members.

1   9.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises providing information in an address book that includes address

3 information for the new member.

1   10.   The computer implemented method of claim 9 further comprising updating

2 the address book based upon information entered by the current members of the group.

1   11.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises providing information in a calendar that includes information for

3 the new member.

1   12.   The computer implemented method of claim 11 further comprising updating

2 the calendar based upon information entered by the current members of the group.

1   13.   The computer implemented method of claim 11 further comprising inviting

2 current group members to attend an event and automatically recording the event in the

3 calendar.

1   14.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises providing an on-line forum for current members of the group to

3 chat with other current members of the group including the new member.

1   15.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises enabling current members of the group to send instant messages

3 to other current members of the group including the new member.

1 16. The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises sharing data files with current members of the group including

3 the new member.

1 17. The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein data files are

2 provided by the current members of the group.

1 18. The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein data files comprise

2 digital images.

1 19. The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein data files comprise

2 photographs.

1 20. The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein data files comprise

2 text files.

1 21. The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein data files comprise

2 multi-media files.

1 22. The computer implemented method of claim 1 further comprising offering

2 new services based upon the current members of the group.

1 23. The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically

2 updating services comprises providing information in a buddy list that includes information

3 for the new member.

1 24. A communication system for sharing information among members of a group

2 comprising:

3   a group administrator for processing information about the current members

4 of the group;

5   a group communicator cooperating with the group administrator for delivering

6 and exchanging information with current and prospective group members; and

7   a group information updater cooperating with the group communicator and

8 group administrator for providing automatically updated services to current members.

1   25. The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group administrator

2 further comprises:

3   a group member profile server for updating data related to current members;

4 and

5   a database connected to the group member profile server for storing data

6 related to current members.

1   26. The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator

2 further comprises:

3   an instant message host complex in communication with a client system; and

4   a login server in communication with a client system and the instant message

5 host complex for determining whether the client is authorized to access the instant message

6 host complex.

1   27. The communication system of claim 26 wherein the instant message host

2 complex further comprises:

3   an instant message server for sending and receiving data; and

4   a domain server cooperating with the instant message server for providing

5 supporting functions of the instant message host complex.

1   28. The communication system of claim 27 wherein the instant message host

2 complex further comprises a routing gateway connected to the instant message server.

1   29. The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator

2 further comprises:

3   an OSP host complex in communication with a client system; and

4   a login server in communication with the client system and the OSP host

5 complex for determining whether the client is authorized to access the OSP host complex.

1   30.   The communication system of claim 26 wherein the OSP host complex further

2   comprises an OSP server for sending and receiving data.

1   31.   The communications system of claim 24 wherein the group information

2   updater further comprises a user interface for communicating and exchanging data with a

3   member of the group.

1   32.   The communications system of claim 31 wherein the user interface resides on

2   an OSP host complex.

1   33.   The communications system of claim 31 wherein the user interface resides on

2   the Internet.

1   34.   A graphical user interface for inviting a prospective member of a group to join

2   the group, the graphical user interface comprising:

3   a message inviting the prospective member to join the group;

4   the name of the group;

5   the current members of the group;

6   and a tool for the prospective member to respond to the invitation.

1   35.   A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium, the method

2   comprising:

3   storing information about all current members of a group;

4   receiving instructions from at least one current member to invite at least one

5   prospective member to join the group;

6   sending an invitation to the prospective member to join the group;

7   receiving an affirmative response from the prospective member;

8   adding the prospective member to the group as a new member; and

9   automatically updating services to current members to account for the new

10 member.

1   36.   The computer program of claim 35 wherein the computer readable medium is a

2   disc.

1   37.   The computer program of claim 35 wherein the computer readable medium is a

2   client device.

1   38.   The computer program of claim 35 wherein the computer readable medium is a

2   host device.

1   39.   The computer program of claim 35 wherein the computer readable medium is a

2   propagated signal.